

"Fools deride. Philosophers investigate."

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# Life and Action

## The Great Work in America

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### *My Answered Prayer.*

*T. W. A.*

*"As ye ask and as ye give, so shall ye receive."*

—“*Brochure on Prayer*”.

I pray for light; more, more; my Spirit craves more light.  
My limitations hem me in, 'tis dark. The night  
Brings near to me another soul sadder than I.  
I take his hands and whisper “Hope”, then bye and bye  
The day breaks and divinest Truth illumines my sight.

I ask for knowledge and for power; I would be wise  
That I might benefit the world. My watchful eyes  
See those around me steeped in sinful, foolish ways;  
I stoop to teach them Wisdom, and the golden rays  
Of Knowledge, Wisdom, Power, come to me from the skies.

And it is ever thus. I ask for help, then find  
Some other soul in deep distress whose wounds I bind  
With loving balm and comradeship and lo! my prayer  
Is answered, and I find it double joy to share  
With others, all the joy that comes to my own mind.

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# The Slaughter of an Hypothesis



*With an Introduction by the TK.*



ACK IN 1902, the *Chicago Sunday Record-Herald* published a specially prepared series of articles by Thomson Jay Hudson, author of "*The Law of Psychic Phenomena*". These articles appeared from week to week, covering a period of some months. They were devoted to the general subject of Psychic Phenomena, and covered a wide range of interesting subject matter. They were presented in Mr. Hudson's fascinating style and charming diction which seldom failed to carry conviction to the minds of his readers. They were widely read and created unusual interest in all sections of the United States.

During this time many letters came to us from readers of Mr. Hudson's articles, asking many questions concerning his remarkable statements and clever arguments, most of which had reference to his—at that time newly published book—"The *Law of Psychic Phenomena*".

Those who are familiar with his writings will recall the fact that his alleged or assumed "Law" of Psychic Phenomena, was, in truth, but an *hypothesis* wherein he had wrought out a clever and interesting *supposition* [not a fact]—that each individual has *two minds*—one of which he named the "objective" and the other the "subjective".

Out of this hypothesis of a *double mind* he accounted—to his apparent satisfaction—for pretty much all the psychic phenomena known—without acknowledging the agency of outside intelligences—especially spiritual beings.

In response to urgent questions from various sources, Florence Huntley wrote an article for the same paper, analyzing

Mr. Hudson's hypothesis and, in her keen and critical application of the simple principles of logic, showed that the hypothesis is so fatally defective and self-contradictory as to be of absolutely no scientific value whatsoever.

Mr. Hudson's friends and admirers were deeply disappointed that he offered no reply whatever; but by his silence virtually confessed that his "working hypothesis" was without value in either science or logic. In as much as Hudson's "*Law of Psychic Phenomena*" is still regarded by a good many students and thinkers as a work of authoritative value, we feel certain the readers of *Life and Action* will appreciate the method of its artistic dissection by Florence Huntley in her reproduced article, which is as follows:

#### FINDS THEORY OF DR. HUDSON PURE SOPHISTRY.

*Florence Huntley Arraigns the Hypothesis on Which Noted Author Bases his "Law of Psychic Phenomena."*

By *Florence Huntley*.

In recent issues of the *Record-Herald*, Thomson Jay Hudson, Ph. D., LL.D., [author of "*The Law of Psychic Phenomena*"], has written at some length on the general subject of "Spiritism".

His evident purpose is to show by the process of inductive reasoning that the phenomena [commonly known and designated as "mediumistic" or "spiritualistic"], do not constitute valid evidence that spirits of the dead communicate with the living through mediums.

Those who are already familiar with his writings will quickly observe that he bases his entire argument upon the hypothesis set forth in his work entitled "*The Law of Psychic Phenomena*".

This being true, it will be seen at a glance that the value of his conclusions concerning the meaning of mediumistic

phenomena depends entirely upon the validity of his original hypothesis. If it should come to be known as a fact that his "working hypothesis" is so illogical and self-contradictory as wholly to destroy its scientific value, then it follows with axiomatic certainty that all his arguments based thereon fall to the ground and become utterly valueless.

Can it be possible that Mr. Hudson has made so fatal a blunder in a work of such pretensions? Let us see.

#### Summary of Hypothesis.

Mr. Hudson's "working hypothesis", stated by himself in his work above referred to, is as follows—namely:

1. "Man has two minds—for convenience I shall designate the one as the objective mind and the other as the subjective mind." [Page 26].

2. "The objective mind is merely the function of the physical brain, while the subjective mind is a distinct entity, possessing independent powers and functions, having a mental organization of its own, and being capable of sustaining an existence independently of the body. In other words, it is the soul." [Page 30].

3. "The objective mind is capable of reasoning by all methods—inductive and deductive, analytic and synthetic." [Page 32].

4. "The subjective mind is incapable of inductive reasoning." [Page 26].

5. "The objective mind is not controllable, against reason, positive knowledge or the evidence of his senses, by the suggestion of another." [Page 30].

6. "The subjective mind is constantly amenable to control by suggestion." [Page 26].

7. "The subjective mind of an individual is as amenable to the control of *his own* objective mind as to the objective

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mind of another." [Page 31].

8. "The subjective mind exercises complete control over the functions and sensations of the body." [Page 199].

#### Overthrows Foundation.

As the foregoing hypothesis constitutes the substantial basis of all Mr. Hudson's argument against the value of mediumistic evidence, it is of the most vital importance to all his conclusions upon that subject. Not only this, if it shall be shown that this hypothesis upon which he postulates his "*Law of Psychic Phenomena*" is illogical, irrational, self-contradictory and unscientific, then all that splendid argumentative development is without foundation, and his "law" is no law at all.

An examination of his working formula, or hypothesis, presents, among others, the following curious and most interesting results, viz:

1. [a] The objective mind is a function of the body. That is, it is a function of the brain. [See proposition 2, of the hypothesis].

[b] The subjective mind exercises complete control over the functions of the body. It therefore controls the objective mind. [See proposition 8 of hypothesis.]

[c] The subjective mind is constantly amenable to control by suggestion of the objective mind. The objective mind therefore controls the subjective mind. [See proposition 7 of hypothesis.]

That is to say, the subjective mind exercises complete control over the objective mind [which is only a function of the body], and at the same time is constantly amenable to control by suggestions of the objective mind.

In other words, the subjective mind controls a function of the body and is controlled by that function at the same time.

Reduced to its simplest expression, this means that the subjective mind constantly controls the objective mind, and is itself at the same time constantly controlled by the objective mind.

And so, according to Mr. Hudson's logic, the subjective mind controls the objective mind, and the objective mind controls the subjective mind. And there you are. It is now in order to inquire which mind is in control. This would strongly suggest that Mr. Hudson's hypothesis upon which he based "*The Law of Psychic Phenomena*" is in grave need of repairs.

2. If the objective mind controls the subjective mind, and is in turn controlled by the subjective mind, then it follows that the *objective* mind controls *itself* by controlling the subjective mind which controls it.

3. Also, if the subjective mind controls the objective mind and the objective mind in turn controls the subjective mind, then it follows that the *subjective* mind controls *itself* by controlling the objective mind which controls it.

4. This only means that the objective mind controls itself and the subjective mind controls itself.

#### Some Terse Questions.

This last proposition seems perfectly reasonable. But if it be true that each of these two minds controls itself, how is it possible for each to be controlled by the other?

On the other hand, if each is controlled by the other, how is it possible for it to control itself?

It is easy to understand how a snake might swallow a frog if the snake were large enough and the frog were small enough. It is also possible to understand that a very large frog might swallow a very small snake. But human reason pauses at the proposition that a snake and a frog may swallow each other at the same time. It is just possible that a "working

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hypothesis" might be constructed which would *compel* them to do so, but if so, such an hypothesis would, in science, be thereby proved false and unscientific.

It must therefore be clear that Mr. Hudson's working hypothesis, which delegates to each of the two minds complete control over the other, is false. It is therefore unscientific. It is therefore without value.

It follows that all his arguments concerning the subject of mediumship, based upon this "working hypothesis", are sophistries, pure and simple. It follows with equal certainty that his entire work entitled "*The Law of Psychic Phenomena*" is without foundation or scientific value.

But this is only the beginning. There are many other equally absurd and illogical results which follow from the sophistries involved in his original "working hypothesis" which cannot be covered in this article".

—From the *Sunday Record-Herald*, July 13, 1902.



When two rational beings think alike they are alike. They are already indissolubly bound. To think alike is to live, aspire, feel and act upon the same general principles. This is fellowship which guarantees permanent understanding, establishes confidence, fixes faith, and banishes solitude. This is the union which wipes out the numeral "1" and absorbs the personal pronoun "I". This is the relation in which man and woman may aspire and work and accomplish. This is the alliance which means health, progress and happiness.

—Harmonics of Evolution.

## *Why Active Church Workers Cannot Represent The Great School*

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T is a subject of the most profound interest and gratification to note the already large and ever-increasing number of ministers of the various churches who are reading the books of the Harmonic Series and expressing their sympathetic interest in the Great School and Work in this country.

Every little while comes an application from a minister, asking for admittance as a regular Student into the formulated Work and Instruction of the School.

These applications call for a careful explanation of the position of the School and its purposes.

The following letter is in response to an application from an active Minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for admittance as a regular Student of the School.

It is of such a general character that it would serve equally well as an answer to an application from an actively engaged Minister of any other Church or School, and for this reason is published as general information to all who may be interested in knowing the facts.

Dear Friend:--

Your courteous and valued, as well as most interesting letter was duly received, and commands my earliest attention. Let me thank you for the thoughtful and valued data and information you were so kind as to give me, and especially for the confidence your letter implies.

Without equivocation, or mental reservation, let me say at the beginning of this response that I am deeply gratified

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to know of your interest in the Work of the Great School in this country, and that it would give me the most sincere and real pleasure if I could be of help to you in your researches along these lines of interesting inquiry.

But a deep sense of my responsibility to you personally, to the School, the Work, and all the interests involved, impels me to tell you frankly that there are, at present and under existing conditions and circumstances, difficulties which seem to me to be insurmountable.

I have no doubt it will be a matter of surprise and even wonderment to you to learn that one of the chief difficulties, as it appears to me, is in the fact that you are a Minister. You might readily and naturally suppose that your profession would fit you especially for a work of this nature; and so it might under ordinary conditions; but I trust I may be able to clear up the mystery by the following explanation and elucidation of the present position of the School and the difficulties under which it is laboring:

1. At the present time our working corps of instructors is not sufficient in numbers to give instruction to all who apply; and from the present ratio of increase in the numbers of applicants it is likely to be several years before we can equip enough instructors to care for all who apply and can prove their right to be admitted as students.

2. In the meantime, inasmuch as we *cannot* instruct *all* who apply, we are compelled to elect from those who apply which ones we will accept and which to reject, until such time as we can educate a much larger corps of instructors than we have at present.

3. In the midst of this dilemma there is but one alternative, namely, to do the thing that will mean most to the interests of the Work; and that is the thing that will most rapidly increase our corps of instructors until we have a sufficient

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number of qualified instructors to care for all the "worthy and well qualified" students who apply.

4. To that end we are, at present, admitting to studentship *only* those who possess the qualifications—and also are in position—to become *instructors with us* and to help us in the enormous task of passing on this knowledge as Teachers and Ministers of *this School and Cause*, and in *their name*.

From the foregoing I trust you will be able to discover the particular basis upon which our "*doctrine of election*" would exclude you, under present existing circumstances and conditions.

1. You are already an accredited "Instructor" in your own Church and School of Religious Teaching.

2. You are therefore not in position to become an Instructor in *this School*. The law of consistency would forbid. For I am sure you will agree with me in the conviction that no man can consistently represent two different and differing Schools of Spiritual wisdom at the same time—especially in the vitally important capacity of Teacher or Minister.

The foregoing covers the situation as it is today, and I trust my explanation is sufficiently lucid to make clear the fact that at the *present time*, and under *existing conditions*, I could not, in justice to the interests involved, open the door of instruction to you.

But what of the future? Suppose the time should come—as we hope it will—when we shall have a sufficient number of Instructors to care for all the applicants who come [and can qualify], what then?

This raises other questions that are vital to the interests of *this School and Work*.

For instance: You are now an accredited Teacher and Minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. You are actively engaged in the work of *that Church*, and I presume are re-

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ceiving a salary for your time, labor and services therein. So long as you occupy that relation, no doubt you feel yourself solemnly obligated to give your time, perform the labor and render the services for which you are paid; and in this you are entirely right.

I can readily understand, therefore, that in applying to this School for its instruction you have had in mind the laudable purpose of gaining a knowledge that would make of you a better Teacher and Minister, and enable you to render a better service to your Church and parishioners. In fact, you seem to indicate as much in the closing paragraph of your good letter. And in this I commend you most heartily.

Nevertheless, I can readily appreciate the fact that in so doing you may, perchance, have overlooked some considerations which only one in my position would be able fully to understand or have in mind even.

For this reason I feel sure that you will follow me with sympathetic interest through the following explanation which I will condense as far as I can do so in justice to the subject.

1. The Great School is engaged, at this time, in the establishment of a definite work in this country, and in carrying forward a definite and specific movement with this as a center of radiation.

2. In order that its energies may not be scattered and its scientific knowledge and methods sophisticated and exploited and appropriated by other already established movements, and its identity and much of its force and value thereby lost or dissipated through dissociation, the Great School is endeavoring to establish and carry forward its own Work in *its own name*.

3. To do this it is definitely and specially instructing and equipping *its own* Teachers and "Ministers" to go out and work in the world as *its* "accredited representatives" and *in*

*its name* to serve mankind and deliver *its message*.

4. All its instruction is a *gift* to those who receive it, and *because* of this fact the School feels that it has the moral right to expect—and it *does so* expect of every student that it educates, that he will, if possible, qualify as one of *its* accredited representatives to pass on *its* knowledge to others *in its name*.

No man in your position could do this and at the same time fulfil his duties and obligations to his Church, for two reasons:

First: Because you are a Methodist Minister, employed in the definite task of teaching and preaching "Methodism"; and you are receiving a salary from that Church as a material consideration for your services — and to enable you to devote all your time, thought, energy and personal effort to spreading the doctrines, the teachings and findings of *that* School and carrying the message of Truth among men in the *name* of that Church and as its accredited representative. Any time and effort spent by you in teaching and preaching in the interests of the Great School—or any *other* School, for that matter—would constitute a breach of your contract with the Methodist Church. If not literally and legally a breach of contract, it would certainly constitute a breach of the *implied* agreement and *moral obligation* on your part to devote your undivided time, thought and effort to the interests of your *own* Church and *its* Cause and vital interests.

Second: Because it is one of the seemingly established principles or conditions of Nature that no man can successfully serve or represent *two* vitally and fundamentally different and differing Spiritual Movements at the same time. I believe this will be so apparent to you that the simple statement of the principle alone will be sufficient to establish its truth.

But now let us suppose, or assume, that the Great School, [after having made to you a Gift of its instruction, covering

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from four to six years of the time, thought, consideration and personal effort of one or more of its accredited representatives and Instructors], should recognize your embarrassing position as a result of your effort to represent two different movements, and should release you from all obligation to it,— what then? You would then be free to devote all your time and energies to your own Church and Cause.

In this event you are at once brought face to face with the problem of how and in what manner you would make use of the knowledge of *this* School and Work as a Methodist Minister in a Methodist Church among converts to Methodism.

1. Would you have the courage to take the books of the "Harmonic Series" — the text works of this School into your Church and pulpit, preach openly from them, recommend them to your congregation for reading and study, and frankly acknowledge the Great School as the source of your knowledge?

2. Or, would you disguise it, dress it up in handsome Methodist clothes, and from your pulpit introduce it to your people as "Modern Methodism"?

Obviously, the first of these two methods would be the *honest* one; and yet, if you followed it, there can be little doubt that the conventionalism of your Church would soon be offended; you would be accused of "Active and pernicious Modernism", would find yourself on the defensive among your own people, and would soon lose your standing and influence as a *Methodist Minister*. This has already been tried, and with these same results — in another Church.

On the other hand, if you cooked it, seasoned it, dressed it and served it to your people in disguise, as good "Methodism", you might thus be of some help to a number of individual members of your Church—but you would do so at the expense and to the positive detriment of *this* School and Work. Why?

Because you thus appropriate its work and its findings, and by giving them another label you destroy their authoritative character and value. This, you will admit, would not be a desirable result from the standpoint of *this* School.

And now, let us suppose that instead of this, and as a final alternative, you should become so deeply impressed with the Science, the Philosophy and the findings of the Great School, that your Conscience would no longer allow you to remain in the active ministry of your Church. What then?

1. You would find yourself out of the ministry.
2. You would find yourself out of your Church.
3. You would find yourself out of employment.
4. You would find yourself without a salary or income.

And even if you turned to the Great School, and offered to become one of its active Teachers or "Ministers", this could not supply your material needs, nor give you a material income or salary for your services. Why?

Because its knowledge and instructions are all a *Gift*, and must ever remain so. No man is permitted to sell his knowledge by receiving pay for any instruction he is authorized to give to any student in this School. In other words, no Teacher nor "Minister" in this School is permitted to sell his services to his students nor make merchandise of his personal instructions.

For the foregoing reasons—among others—it is always with a deep sense of reluctance that I consider the application from any actively employed Minister of any Church, more especially if he is in any sense dependent upon his profession for his material income or support. The chances are:

1. That his studies in this School will awaken in him the spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction with his Church work, and the desire to withdraw from it.
  2. That he will desire to enter upon the Work of this School.
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But inasmuch as his work in this School must be a "Gift"—"Without money and without price"—you can see at a glance the embarrassing dilemma into which this would lead him. It would also embarrass me, because I have nothing to offer him that would afford him an income sufficient to support him.

I trust I have now made clear the reasons why I do not feel myself at liberty to encourage you in the future, so long as your position in the Church is one of material dependence in any sense. If you were financially independent, this phase of the situation would not mean quite so much for it would very likely adjust itself in the course of time.

I want you to know, however, that I appreciate most deeply your interest in this School and Work; and your Masonic status especially pleases me, and impels me to hope that you may be able in that field to supplement this School in its effort to serve humanity. Our work is, in that field at least, sympathetic, and I trust may be mutually helpful.

Assuring you of my friendship and good will, and thanking you again for your interesting and valued letter, I remain, with best of good wishes,

Your Friend and Brother,

TK.



"If the day looks kinder gloomy  
An' your chances kinder slim,  
If the situation's puzzlin'  
An' the prospects awful grim,  
An' perplexities keep pressin'  
Till all hope is nearly gone;  
Jus' bristle up an' grit y'r teeth,  
An' keep on keepin' on."

—The Banner Builder.

## Technical Work not Necessary to Attain Spiritual Vision.



IT IS NOW THIRTEEN YEARS since the publication of *Harmonics of Evolution*—the first text book of the School of Natural Science. With the appearance of that volume there began a stream of correspondence from interested readers which has increased in volume and importance with the passing of the years and with the publication of each succeeding volume. These letters have been carefully preserved and in them and their answers might be found the material for an almost endless number of articles which would be both interesting and instructive to our readers. From time to time it is proposed to publish some of these without names or other information which might lead to the identification of the writers, and it is intended that they shall cover subjects which are of special importance in connection with the Work.

The following letter received soon after the publication of "The Great Work" covers some of the many questions that Volume III has suggested to its readers:

New York City, July 31, 1907.

My dear TK:-

I have studied word for word your book "*The Great Work*" with profound interest. I have tried it by the severest tests that I apply to any book, to see if there is that within me which responds to it. There are really not a dozen books, I think I am safe in saying, that I have the time, or have thought it worth while, to attempt to test in this way, that is, by *living* the book. Your book reaches beyond my depths, but I feel

that there is *sincerity* in it and am greatly drawn toward it.

Somewhat I feel that its teaching is not wholly new to me, while much of your nomenclature is in large part new. The ideas seem to me wonderfully familiar; yet I know not when, or where, or from whom, I have seen or heard them. They fit right in with my belief and with my life. Nothing can be truer than your Constructive and Destructive Principles. You make your points wonderfully clear.

I want to know more of your "Technical Work", and would like very much to master it. This seems to me the greatest of all work. Cannot this be mastered by *living the life anywhere*, by a surrender of self to service for others and for the development of the higher soul elements by higher thinking, nobler feeling, by the surrender of self to *Nature*, to *God*? If there is sincerity in the heart are we not working in harmony with Nature? Does not *Nature* then open the door and point the way?

Will you permit me to ask you a few questions which may strike you simply as curious, but they mean more than curiosity?

1. In the superior vision you speak of on page 399, etc., is the *physical* eye of our natural body necessary? That is, could a man who is physically blind develop the vision? I am sure you will say "yes".

2. In your visits to the spiritual planes, in what way do you recognize the intelligences there? How do you prove to your own mind that these intelligences are not the creations of your own subliminal mind, etc.?

3. In leaving your body on earth to visit another on earth, have you ever performed a series of experiments, such as a scientist would require, to prove that this is not a delusion? For example, could you visit me in New York and give me evidence afterwards that you have done so? This experiment is not suggested out of mere curiosity, but to determine that

some subjective faculty or power is not in action.

Permit me again to thank you for the work you have done and are doing.

Cordially and sincerely,  
F. K. I.

Answer.

Chicago, August 3, 1907.

My dear Doctor:-

Your courteous and valued letter should have had an immediate response, but for the pressure of work which demanded my constant attention. I presume there are few busier men than myself. If there are any at all of that kind I do not know them.

I should like to write you at length in reply to your several questions and interesting suggestions; but the fact that I have no helper of any kind [not even a stenographer], compels me to crowd things into the fewest words possible.

What you tell me of your reading of Volume III, gratifies me deeply. I trust it has not excited my vanity, but rather stimulated my gratitude. I am indeed grateful to you that in the midst of your very busy life you have found the time and had the inclination to read the book in such careful and critical manner as to be able to pass an intelligent judgment of it on the basis of its real spirit and purpose. I am also gratified to know that you have been impressed with the *sincerity* of the work, however much of it there may be which does not appeal to you from your own view of "physical science".

I have studied your own published works, as far as my limited opportunities have permitted; and as far as I have gone have been impressed with the integrity of your motives and purposes. I know that you are a man of intelligence. I believe you want to know the truth regardless of the relation

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it may sustain to your present theories, beliefs, views or convictions.

I have a suspicion that this is the reason why the teachings and findings contained in "*The Great Work*" do not seem new to you, why they appeal to you so strongly, and why you feel yourself drawn to them with such impelling force. From past experiences and a deep study of the subject I am persuaded in my own mind that there is something in the essential nature of Truth that identifies it to the honest searcher in such manner as to remove from it all sense of newness.

Do you not think it possible that by the universal language of impulse we sense the Truth, in a sort of automatic or involuntary manner, as the "established relations" of nature with which the soul is always more or less familiar? As I think back over the past experiences of my own life, with the thought in mind, I cannot recall when any great and vital Truth has come to me in such manner as to impress me with any sense of its newness or unfamiliarity.

Since the book referred to was written I believe it would be well within the figures to say that more than five hundred intelligent people have said to me, in substance, that the book seems to contain little with which they were not already more or less familiar, but which they had never consciously come into contact. Many have said, in effect, that I have only put into definite expression what they already had sensed.

I am pleased and gratified that this is true, for it effectually substantiates one of the important things I have so much desired to make clear to my readers, namely, that I have but echoed truths that are as old as human nature, with which all men *ought* to be familiar, whether they are or not.

I have not sought to establish any claim of originality, save as to my method of expression, which alone is mine, and which alone might justly be said to be original, or new. Be-

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cause of these things I think I understand why "the ideas seem wonderfully familiar" to you as well as to many others.

And now, as briefly as may be possible, let me see how far I may be able to answer the specific questions you ask:

1. In the development of the spiritual vision referred to at page 399 of "*The Great Work*", the physical eye of the "natural body" is not necessary. In two different instances where the physical sight was completely destroyed I have enabled the individuals, under careful instructions, to develop perfect spiritual vision. What could be more conclusive evidence than this of the fact that we possess a double material organism — one physical and the other spiritual?

2. This also answers your second question, namely, that one who is totally blind [physically] may, under proper instructions and conditions, develop clear and distinct spiritual sight.

3. In my visits to the spiritual planes, "I am able to recognize and identify the spiritual inhabitants there by the use of my spiritual senses, in a manner closely analogous to the manner in which I am able to recognize and identify the inhabitants of earth by the use of my physical senses. The processes are virtually identical, except that a different set of sensory organs is employed.

4. Your next question is : "How do you prove to your own mind that these intelligences you call '*spiritual*' are not merely the creations of your own subliminal mind?"

My answer is: In precisely the same way I prove to my own mind that physically embodied intelligences are not mere creations of my imagination, or my subliminal mind. That is to say, by oft repeated experiments and experiences, with that definite purpose in mind.

We learn to trust the integrity and reliability of our physical eyes by repeated experiments and the repeated experiences

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resulting therefrom. But it so occurs that sometimes our physical eyes are deceived. True, but this fact does not convince us that *all* our experiences are delusional or false. It only teaches us to know that under some *exceptional* conditions the physical eye may be deceived. But by sufficient experimentation, with that purpose in view, it is possible for us upon the physical plane to learn to differentiate between realities and illusions, even when the illusions are most perfect. It is merely a matter of repeated experiment, demonstration and experience.

Most people who call themselves religious have little difficulty in accepting as a "fact of nature" that "there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body". And those of us who have proven the existence of the spiritual body know that its relation to the conscious Soul or Intelligence is closely analogous to that between the physical body and the Soul. It is on the basis of this close analogy that we are able to learn after awhile how to differentiate the real from the illusional.

Does it seem to you that there should, or *could*, be any other method of demonstration? I trust you do not take the position that *all* the experiences of the "subliminal mind" [as you call it] are mere "creations" and therefore illusions. If you concede that *any* of them are real, as I am sure you do, then I have no doubt you would also be able to see that with the necessary amount of scientific experimenting the intelligent individual would learn, in time, to differentiate spiritual realities as well as physical ones. And if this be true, can you think of any way, other than through repeated experiment, by which this could be accomplished? I know of no other way. It is the law of individual unfoldment, from infancy to old age, upon this physical plane, and this law has its perfect correlate upon the spiritual planes.

5. "In leaving the body on earth, to visit another on

earth", I have, indeed, made "a series of experiments such as a scientist would require to prove that this is not a delusion". All this experimental work, however, has been done entirely for the purpose of satisfying myself as to the verity and reliability of my experiences, and not for the purpose of convincing others.

In my anxiety to be of service to the world, I have taken some things for granted relative to the attitude of other people toward subjects of this nature. As a result I have learned some hard lessons in the great university of Experience, which I trust it may not be necessary to repeat during this life.

I have learned from a long and bitter experience, among other things, that there is but one way whereby the conventional "physical scientist" will ever accept the legitimate results of such an experiment—or rather the verity and integrity of such results—and that is by making the experiments himself.

From my years of personal contact with, and work among, these men of science, I have learned that there are a number of so-called "explanations" which the conventional materialist is able to formulate upon the basis of his various "working hypotheses" concerning the human *Mind*, any one of which is more satisfactory to him than is the Truth fully demonstrated.

In this connection I was able to prove to one of the prominent men of this type of scientist, that in the presence of such a scientific "test" and "experiment", he would not trust the integrity of his own senses. I learned from this, and other equally remarkable facts, that any attempt on my part to serve the interests of humanity through the channels of the school of physical science would prove to be not only futile, but time wasted which I might easily turn to better account.

6. You are entirely correct in your understanding of the results of "*Living the Life*".

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*Morality*, as defined by this School, is the scientific basis of all Constructive Spirituality. The man who *lives the life*, no matter where he may be, nor what may be the conditions which surround him, is on the road which leads to "Spiritual Illumination". If he persists, it is but a question of *time* when he will make the demonstration and enjoy the personal experience.

The most important purpose of the "Technical Work" is merely to accelerate the process and hasten the results.

One of the vital purposes of the School in this present effort is to make clear to the world the scientific nature and value of *Morality* and establish the scientific *fact* that there is but one road to the "Land of Liberty and Light" and that is, through the *Living of the Life*.

7. In the foregoing you will find the elements of an answer to your final question. Even the "Technical Work" can be mastered in time through living the life anywhere. You have sensed the process and the principle perfectly. The entire process is merely that of bringing the "Attitude of Soul" into alignment with Nature's Constructive Principle. When that has been accomplished Nature responds and opens the door. The difficult thing, with the large majority of those who are in search of spiritual light, is to realize fully the meaning and vital importance of *Morality*, and that there is absolutely no other way to open the door of spiritual independence than that of full compliance with Nature's unalterable demands.

While I am painfully conscious that a volume could be said in response to any one of your several questions, by way of explanation and elucidation, nevertheless, I trust that what I have said will be sufficient to indicate to you my understanding and appreciation of your own position and assure you of my profound respect for and sympathy with every honest searcher for Truth—in every field and department of Science, whether physical, spiritual or psychical.

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I thank you again for the expressions of confidence and good will contained in your letter, and with fraternal greetings and good wishes, believe me,

Cordially and sincerely,

TK.



### *My Prayer Thread.*

I keep in touch with my heavenly home at all times through prayer and communion. Prayer is like a holy, magnetic, spiritual thread that seems attached to me, having the quality of allowing me free action in all things, yet being ever connected to my "home" and "home folks", viz: "The Great Father before whom we are all as but children", and to all the invisible and visible helpers of mankind. So then when my heart is full of joy and peace, I share my happiness with my spiritual kinsfolk. Also when so-called troubles and trials come upon me, my heart vibrates along the magnetic thread with lightning-like rapidity, and peace and consolation flow in on me even in the midst of the storm. I go forth to fight life's battles, and though foes surround and press me hard, I am in touch with unseen battalions that far outnumber all that my foes can bring against me. By prayer I have ever the resources of Heaven and my spiritual friends at my command. Therefore, come all that men call calamities, I am ever ready. Nothing can separate me from the base of my supplies; and I know no calamity in this physical life so great as it would be if my prayer thread were severed and I knew that I never could connect up again.

—T.W.A.

## Beyond.

*By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

It seemeth such a little way to me  
Across to that strange country—the Beyond;  
And yet not strange, for it has grown to be  
The home of those of whom I am so fond.  
They make it seem familiar and most dear,  
As journeying friends bring distant regions near.

So close it lies that when my sight is clear  
I think I almost see the gleaming strand.  
I know I feel those who have gone from here  
Come near enough sometimes to touch my hand.  
I often think but for our veiled eyes  
We should find Heaven right round about us lies.

I cannot make it seem a day to dread,  
When from this dear earth I shall journey out  
To that still dearer country of the dead,  
And join the lost ones so long dreamed about.  
I love this world, yet shall I love to go  
And meet the friends who wait for me, I know.

I never stand above a bier and see  
The seal of death set on some well-loved face  
But that I think, "One more to welcome me  
When I shall cross the intervening space  
Between this land and that one 'over there';  
One more to make the strange Beyond seem fair.

And so for me there is no sting to death,  
And so the grave has lost its victory.  
It is but crossing—with a bated breath  
And white, set face—a little strip of sea,  
To find the loved ones waiting on the shore,  
More beautiful, more precious than before.

## Questions Answered by the TK



UESTION: In seeking further light on the interesting subject of Prayer, I would be pleased to know: "*For whom may we pray?*"

It seems that some of my good friends differ as regards the propriety of praying for "others". They claim that we have no right to do so, as the result may be harmful to the unworthy; also that it would be ineffective upon those who are not in a receptive mood, or condition.

As the Great School has never impressed me with the idea that it desires to abrogate the "Sermon on the Mount", I hold that the gentle admonition of Jesus to his followers, as expressed in Matthew V, 44 and in Luke XXIII, 34, is still valid, and expresses a wholesome rule of conduct on the subject of Prayer. Am I right?

—G. A. Wolter.

Dear Friend Wolter:-

From slightly different angles this same problem has come up among the friends and students a number of times. To my surprise—and also my regret—I learn that some of them seem to have applied the Law of Personal Responsibility in a manner to reflect little credit upon the teachings and findings of the Great School. But this only serves to show how extremely difficult it is to define and state a principle of law in such manner that it cannot be misapplied by those who do not want to obey it.

For illustration: It can be stated truly as a general principle of life and rule of conduct, that the Law of Personal Responsibility obligates every individual [who can] to care for himself in a material sense. I think this is so apparent that very few men of intelligence would question it.

But by eliminating or omitting from the statement the two little words in parenthesis—"who can"—the way is opened for us to evade or avoid a heavy and vital responsibility which rests upon us all.

The omission of those two little words would make it appear obligatory upon *every* individual to care for himself in a material sense, under any and all conditions and circumstances of life, quite regardless of whether he is able to do so or not.

And those who are selfish, mean and unsympathetic, and who do not *want* to help those less fortunate than themselves, who can *not* care for themselves, are sorely tempted to "rub out" those two little words "who can" and thus make the revised statement so read as to relieve them from the personal responsibility to help those who can not help themselves.

For if by any process we could make the law read "every individual", then by the simple rule of logic we could easily prove that we have no *right* to help *anybody*, and that to do so would be a positive wrong, not only to us but to the individual also, in that by helping him we relieve him of his own personal responsibility to "care for himself", and even deprive him of the *opportunity* to do so.

But we all know that this is only sophistry—and the most disingenuous sort of sophistry at that. It would seem so bald and illogical and unreasonable that a mere child could scarcely be deceived by it. And yet, I have been told that there are those among the accredited students of this School who have given expression to precisely this character and line of sophistry.

If this be true, then it is indeed fortunate that the subject has come up for consideration at this time among the students and friends of the Work.

If it were true that every individual, regardless of conditions, is bound by the Law of Personal Responsibility to

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care for himself, then the *Law of Service* is entirely abrogated, and the Law of Life becomes the Law of *Supreme Selfishness*.

The Great School holds that the very fundamental purpose of Life is alone conserved by conformance with the Constructive Principle of Nature, the key to which is "*Morality and Service*". But wherein is there room for "*Service*" if we are not permitted to *Serve* those who *need*?

All this is but another illustration of the ease and facility with which we are wont to apply the Law of Personal Responsibility to "the other fellow", and fall over backward in our effort to make ourselves appear "upright" in our dealings with our fellows.

The individual who assumes to know all the needs of his fellow men and women certainly assumes much, if not indeed infinite knowledge. And if, perchance, he should become so preoccupied and busy applying the Law of Personal Responsibility to the rest of mankind that he forgets [or has no time for] its application to himself, he will surely and inevitably lose many an opportunity for "*Service*" to those who need that which he might easily give, and will invoke upon himself a just application of the Law of Compensation from which he may well pray to all the beneficent agencies and Powers to be delivered.

*For whom may we pray?* For all who are weary and heavy laden; for all who are afflicted in body, mind or soul; for all who are oppressed with sorrow and are in distress; for all who are bound by ignorance, superstition or fear; for all who hate you, persecute or despitefully use you; for all who suffer from temptations to evil; for all who wander in darkness and are seeking the light; for all who follow the wrong yet know the right; for all who are in the bondage of evil intelligences and destructive forces; for all who are in need of that which is in the power of others to bestow.

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But suppose in your ignorance you should pray for those who do not deserve the blessings you ask for them, what then? Pray then that your prayer be answered only insofar as your cause be just and the need be real.

Remember that within the radius of your supplicating influence are those wiser than you; nevertheless, whose attention you may be able to arrest and attract to those for whom you pray. Their greater wisdom may, perchance, enable them to determine justly some of the equities and the rights of those for whom we pray.

If you came across one in this life helpless, suffering, hungry and in distress, you would know, without stopping to reason it out, that it was your duty to help him in just so far as you had the power and the means to do so. Instinctively, or by the higher sense of intuition, you would solve the moral problem involved within the fraction of a second.

And if you had neither the power nor the means at your own command, you would not hesitate to ask your generous, kind and sympathetic friend who has the ability, to render the needed aid. And in this you would be praying for the one in need, just as truly as if you addressed your petition for help to the Great Father, to God, or to the ministering angels above this plane of earth.

And you would have solved the problem of prayer correctly, and in your acts would have answered your own question.

Under circumstances such as these, is there a student of this School anywhere who would question his own right to render the needed help lest he might relieve the beneficiary of the obligation to "care for himself"? I cannot conceive of such a thing. For if this is not an exemplification of the "Law of Service" what is it?

The whole problem of Sociology is founded upon the principle of co-operation. But the principle of co-operation

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is only another expression for the "Law of Mutual Service". And in its final aspect and analysis the Law of Mutual Service is but another expression for the mutual Receiving and Giving involved in Prayer and the Answer to Prayer.

And in this view of the subject Prayer and its Answer are the very foundation principle upon which the social structure is erected.



*Question:* What is the proper designation, or title, of a female "Master"? —W.R.E.

*Answer:* The sense in which the term "Master" is employed by the Great School has no sex distinction whatever. The term is used to designate a certain degree of proficiency attained by a Student of this School.

One who takes the second degree at a university is called a "*Master of Arts*"—and it makes no difference whether the individual be man or woman.

In that case the name is also that of the *degree* conferred by the university, and is indicated by the initial letters "M. A." or the abbreviation "A. M."

In the Great School one who takes the *Third Degree* is called a "*Master of the Law*" technically; and this is true whether the individual be man or woman.

For convenience the term "*Master*" is employed in general parlance, and this term also designates the name of the *degree* conferred by the Great School on its students who successfully complete the third degree work.

To those who are not accustomed to considering the subject from this standpoint it strikes the ear as odd, or unusual, to hear a woman called "Master".

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So it is with the title of "Doctor". My own ear has never become entirely accustomed to the sound, or association of sounds, which indicates the name of a woman doctor.

"Dr. Emma", or "Dr. Matilda Ann", or "Dr. Mary Jane", in spite of my knowledge to the contrary, conveys to my consciousness a sort of hybrid impression—just as it did in other years to hear one of our neighbor girls called "Jake".

Long continued association of certain names with certain ideas and ideals establishes, in course of time, certain relations in our consciousness which seem correct and right to us, and any variation therefrom conveys to us a sense of the abnormal.

It is only the long continued association of the name "Master" with the idea of "Man" that impels the consciousness to question the propriety of admitting the possibility of a "Lady Master".

There seems, however, to be a growing tendency on the part of both men and women, to adopt designations and terms which carry with them the sex differentiation, and thus become self-explanatory.

Under this impulse some of the universities designate the woman graduate as a "Mistress of Art".

Merely as a matter of convenience I am rather inclined to commend this idea. And for this reason it would seem to me to be quite admissible to designate a "Lady Master of the Law" as a "Mistress of the Law"—or, for greater convenience a "Mistress".

There may be some, however, who would object to this last on the ground that association has already fastened upon the term an uncomplimentary suggestion which should disqualify it for service in the more exalted sense. And to me, this objection seems not unreasonable.



**Question:** Is it possible for a disembodied spirit to commit suicide and destroy the spirit's body? If so, what would be the result?

The above questions were asked at a Spiritualist meeting, and all but one agreed that it was impossible for a spirit to commit the act, or dodged the question in various ways. The one claimed there was a Constructive and a Destructive process in nature, and a spirit out of the body had as much power and free-will, and could employ either, and the process of evolution would be quickened by that method, providing the law of reincarnation was not in force. Any light you can give will be thankfully received.

—R. H. Weed.

**Answer:** If you will turn to page 299 of "*The Great Psychological Crime*"—Volume II of the "Harmonic Series"—beginning with paragraph numbered "4", you will find the first step toward the answer of your question.

Reading to the end of the chapter, you will observe the following:

1. In the spiritual life the power of individual choice obtains as it does in the physical.
2. That under this power of individual choice it is possible for the individual to align himself with the Destructive Principle of Nature in that life as in this.
3. That under the operation of that principle he may go down to what we know as "Spiritual Death".

Now if you will turn to the closing chapter entitled "The Genesis of Dogma", beginning at page 391, and read carefully to the close, you will observe that even the wisest of the Wise Men of the Great School of Natural Science, on both planes of life, do not claim to know with scientific certainty whether that which is named "Spiritual Death" is, in truth and in fact, what it appears to be, namely, a real, final death of the

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Soul, or whether it is but another transition of the Soul to some other state of individual existence and life.

This is one of the many "unsolved problems" of Nature. With this School it is an "Open Question". The Great Friends do not assume to dogmatize upon its meaning nor its solution. It will remain one of the "Open Questions" with this School until such time as it is able to speak to the world with scientific certainty.

Every student and Friend of this School and Work should read carefully the book above referred to, until he understands the position of the School on the subject of so-called "Spiritual Death". It is a problem of profound interest and importance, but one upon which no student should assume to dogmatize.



#### *Editor Life and Action:*

May I ask of your time and knowledge sufficient for an answer, through your excellent magazine, *Life and Action*, to the following problem that has puzzled me a long time.

Assuming that the claims of some of our noted seers and clairvoyants are true and that they can see into the future for 600 years and see the working details of the establishment of a new race; and that they can see into the past for thousands and thousands of years and read the written records in the "book of life", why is this great power never employed to aid present humanity and for the solution of problems that agitate the minds and harrow the souls of men, little problems that could be solved and bring happiness to the homes and hearts of thousands; for instance, the recovery of a lost child, whose disappearance has aroused the sympathies of the whole world? This is only an instance—there are hundreds in which the

power might be employed, good accomplished, truth demonstrated, and the mocker silenced.

I want to commend you for your generosity in giving publicity to the criticism [?] from your Theosophical friend in the January-February number, and to say that I fully approve the remarks made by you in a previous number of *Life and Action*, which prompted the "criticism". Alas, I fear, the Theosophical Society is not as free of gentlemen of that character of mind as it might be. I speak from an experience gained by ten years of association with the society, in which I am no longer active.

I am also led to make an observation about your remarks anent Fra Elbertus, and to ask, "Is he worthy your notice?" In the last number of his *Phillistine* is printed such a foul suggestion, one of many that have been printed by him lately, that I consider it almost loathsome to mention his name in association with a decent thing.

—C.C.

#### ANSWER.

1. The fundamental assumption upon which your question is based is one of such tremendous proportions that, if it could be substantiated, there would indeed seem to be no answer that would justify the facts and conditions of life as we are compelled to meet them and deal with them from day to day.

But, unfortunately for the cause of Truth, of Science, of Philosophy and of Humanity, there seems to be no way of proving either the truth or the fallacy of any such prophecies, other than simply to "wait with patience" until the years have rolled by and "Father Time" has presented the record of Facts. Even then, in most instances, it is a question of "interpretation". "Prophecies" are usually so worded as to

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leave them open to many interpretations, and the facts may be made to support any or all of them.

Whatever the "claims" of those noted seers and clairvoyants may be, especially concerning "things to come", it is safe to take them "*cum grano salis*", and leave plenty of margin for the interpreters to make their notations and commentaries upon.

2. If we grant the possibility of authentic prophecy—and there is much evidence to support it within certain broad, general lines—this fact, of itself, would not prove that such a gift or power could be employed "for the solution of problems that agitate the minds of men"—such problems, at least, as you have suggested.

The finding of a lost child, for instance, would call for the exercise of powers of a very different nature from those involved in the process of looking "into the future for six hundred years" or "into the past for thousands and thousands of years," etc.

There have been many authentic instances, some of which have come under the personal observation of the writer, wherein lost children, as well as material articles of intrinsic value, or of value through association, have been located and found solely by the exercise of psychic powers.

An exhibition of this character was given in the city of Minneapolis, Minnesota, only a few years ago, at which the writer was present. One of the "tests" was as follows:

One of the members of the committee of scientists chosen to test the psychic's powers, took a small scarf-pin from another member of the committee [in the room occupied by the psychic in the Hotel West] and, leaving the other members and the psychic in the room, went out into the city and was gone over an hour. On his return the psychic was heavily and securely blindfolded and helped into a double buggy and given the

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reins of the horses. Without a word or sign from anyone, he started the horses at a swift trot and drove, in what seemed an utterly reckless speed, through the heart of the business section. He turned many corners and without accident drove nearly two miles, and stopped in front of a large business block. He sprang from the buggy, rushed into the building and straight to the elevator [all the while blindfolded], entered and said "Up! Up!" When the elevator approached the seventh floor he signaled to stop. He rushed from the elevator down the corridor, the committee following him closely, and stopped in front of an office door, opened it, rushed in and wended his way around among the desks and other furniture, and in the back of the room reached over behind a large box and there on the floor picked up the scarf-pin, where the member of the committee had placed it.

The test was complete, and to the entire satisfaction of all who witnessed it. This incident alone proves that there are such psychic powers and possibilities, and that under right conditions they may be developed. But in our present state of psychic development, it is the rare exception among men who has attained such degree and kind of psychic unfoldment. That one man has attained to such an evolutionary unfoldment, however, is evidence that others may do so.

And since the human race is in a state of continuous evolutionary unfoldment, it would seem possible that in the fullness of time a much larger percentage of the population will develop such powers.

Granting that this is but one of the fruits of human unfoldment, it is not difficult to conceive that a time *may* come when it will be the exception among men who will *not* possess such psychic unfoldment.

But at present we are only "in process" and "en-route".

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## *More About Theosophy and The Great School* By J. D. Buck, M.D.



MONG "Letters from our Readers", questions have more than once arisen as to the relations of the Theosophical Society to the School of Natural Science, and of the "Masters" referred to and represented by H. P. Blavatsky, and the "Great Friends" and "Masters" referred to in the "Great Work". How are they related? Do they co-operate?

Perhaps from some familiarity with both these groups of workers, I can elucidate a little further.

The Theosophical Society was an *organization* from the beginning, with Col. Olcott as "President Founder", H. P. Blavatsky as Secretary, and groups or branches in different states and countries, with group officers, annual conventions, and the like, all *federated* under the "Parent Society".

The School of Natural Science outwardly is neither an *organization* or *federation* at all. It is spoken of as an *association* only of individuals, interested in the Work. There are no group pledges, by-laws, constitutions, or "officers".

From all we can learn the Great Friends are not, as individuals identical with what are spoken of as "the Theosophical Mahatmas". This fact does not imply antagonism, or criticism, either way. *They are different.*

Next, as a matter of fact, only, as now and here referred to, the *method of teaching* in and by the two groups differs very greatly.

We may grant that the source—the ancient Wisdom—the motive and aim, were, at least, quite similar.

Voluminous as were the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, covering most phases of thought, ancient and modern, constituting a mine of intellectual wealth, inspired by the noblest and most unselfish motives, these teachings, as they reached individuals and groups, constituted a "Philosophy of Ancient Wisdom" and of Life.

The Branches studied and taught—Karma, Reincarnation, Seven Principles, Roots, Races, Rounds, and the symbolic attributes of man's faculties and powers, "astral, spiritual, Devachanic, Nirvanic," etc., etc.

H. P. Blavatsky's whole method of teaching was *Philosophic*. This does not mean that it had no practical application to individual life. Numbers of the Theosophical Society studied this ancient Vedic Philosophy, and endeavored to apply it to their own lives.

The School of Natural Science as represented in the Harmonic Series, has adopted the name and *method* of Science. It lays no stress upon and formulates no postulates of philosophy.

It turns the individual back upon himself, saying—Look within! Search diligently! Find yourself! Who and what are you? What he finds must "depend solely upon personal effort and the leading of a life" and not upon what he is told. He may have hints, or suggestions, from time to time, but is never indoctrinated.

For my own part, I have derived great benefit and satisfaction from both these *methods* of study. I believe H. P. Blavatsky's writings and work will be far better understood and appreciated fifty years hence by intelligent and discriminative students than they are today. The Society, the organization she founded,—is now represented by factions, often antagonistic, with "Leaders" and "Official Heads", some of whom mistake rampant egotism for philosophy, and exploitation, for instruction.

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Digging to the core of the original motive and design, there is no necessary antagonism between Philosophy and Science. Intrinsically they supplement and explain each other.

Philosophy is the synthesis of the facts of Science.

The Theosophical Society did not "fail". It ran its course and did its work. Read the "Conclusion"—the last chapter in the "Key to Theosophy" and see how clear-sighted and discriminative was its author. What she anticipated has come to pass, but not in the way she hoped.

So the question of "co-operation" referred to by one of our correspondents, becomes purely one of individual intelligence, freedom from bias and bigotry, love of and loyalty to the simple truth; and I can imagine the Masters would face the same problem and solve it in the same way.

Prejudice, antagonism, bigotry and sectarianism do not belong to the "Constructive Principle" in individual life or human evolution.



### *Results of the Ages.*

The Great School, as it exists upon the earth at this time, is but the present and last link of a great unfinished chain, by means of which the crystallized results of the ages past are brought down to us of this day and generation.

And you who shall receive these results in good faith, and who of your own free will and accord enlist your services in the Great Work of Emancipation, will constitute the next regular link in the same great chain.

And thus the cumulative results of the ages may be passed on to others who are ready, willing and able to receive them and rightly use them.

—The Great Work.

## A Letter From South America

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HE following letter is of much more than passing interest. Its author is an American who, in his efforts to make the most of this life's opportunities, found his way into the South American continent, and into the great and wonderful country of Brazil.

One of his college class-mates, who had become deeply interested in the Work of the Great School in this country, sent him a gift set of the volumes of the "*Harmonic Series*", thinking that they would be of interest to him in that far-away southern country. Evidently the donor asked his friend to read the books and then write him frankly his impressions and convictions as to the truth or falsity of the teachings and findings therein contained.

That which follows this introductory statement is a part of the letter recently received by the donor of the books from his friend who had just finished a careful reading of them. Therein he endeavors to give his impressions; and his criticism is one that should be of intense interest and real value to every student and Friend of the Work.

A quaint sense of good-natured sarcasm runs throughout his criticism and gives to it a personal touch which reveals a charming friendship and a fine intelligence.

He makes his points with rare clearness and force, and in a charming spirit and diction which invite confidence and good will and reveal a broad, liberal and discriminating intelligence.

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Rio de Janeiro, Aug. 10, 1910.

"The books ordered reached me all right. I read them both through within twenty-four hours, and have since read them again; so you see you made no mistake when you thought they would interest me.

Needless to say, I found myself arguing with you all the way through, and thinking of many a warm discussion we used to have along the same line, all of which ended in the same way, by the bell ringing for Logic without either of us being convinced.

Of course, I did not feel so bad about not convincing you; but I was always rather sorry that you were not quite capable of even properly appreciating my position, when I so clearly saw through your arguments—fallacies and all.

I suppose you are still attached irrevocably to your doctrine of Free Will; and of course I knew that one reason you wanted me to read the books was because you thought Mr. TK. was all on your side. But quite the contrary, I assure you. True, he makes a great point of Personal Responsibility, written with Capital Letters; but in the sense in which he uses the term, i.e., the inexorable law which exacts that each man pay the penalty or reap the reward of his own acts, I do not suppose any one ever denied Personal Responsibility. In fact, this fits in exactly with the law of the inevitable sequence of cause and effect, which is the whole basis of what I have despairingly tried to show you so many times.

However, I am afraid you are hopeless on this point, and it is no doubt just as well so, as it is not a very inspiring truth to ponder on at best. Strange, the way a man's beliefs depend on his temperament, is it not? Given a man's heredity and environment, one can say with certainty just what he will believe. This law of universal fatality, which to me is as plain as that two and two are four, you are incapable of accepting.

Being a man of strong personality, with a strong will and highly developed sense of responsibility—[don't blush]—you deny patent facts on the ground that you have in your own consciousness the proof of their fallacy.

To believe as I do would, for you, destroy the whole meaning and pleasure of life, which—to you again—is a greater absurdity than to deny that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points; or that the given universe of today, acting under immutable law, will produce a given result tomorrow. Do I not put it about right? It is inspiring, I admit. The Declaration of Independence fades into insignificance.

To declare one's independence of the laws of George III, becomes as nothing when compared to the sublime independence of the man who throws bodily aside the laws of the eternal and inscrutable universe and declares himself superior to them all. It is sublime. I do not say it sarcastically, but, old man, there is nothing in it.

You must remember that you and I have both probably inherited an over-developed sense of responsibility from our Methodist ancestors. And I hasten to say that by this I mean no disrespect to said ancestors. My grandfather I admire as a man more, perhaps, than any man I know. He is a man of liberal mind, incapable of an unworthy motive or an uncharitable thought—a man of astonishing purity of ideals, and love for the right. That he has a definite faith which shapes his actions and his whole life, I am convinced. I have noticed that he never takes long to make up his mind. He seems to have something back in his consciousness somewhere to which he refers any question that comes up, and which sends him back an answer that admits of no doubt. He never changes his mind, and I am sure that never once in his life has he regretted a stand once taken, or an action done.

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What a source of strength this must be to a man. I attribute to this quality a certain amount of his success and his many friends. Intellectually, I do not know his superior. His appreciation of all forms of literature is keen, and I have never felt that I saw any point that he did not.

So, my grandfather tells me that when he was a young man an outside influence for good entered his life, of which he has been conscious ever since. Do I doubt him? Far from it. But I say his testimony must be taken with due consideration of his temperamental tendency to believe just what he does believe. Think of the essential narrowness of a man who is incapable of an underhand motive!

Of course, from my point of view, there is no question of cause and effect as between faith and temperament, since they both are equally causes and effects, and inseparable parts of the general scheme of things.

Now, you and my grandfather are on good ground in arguing from personal knowledge; and I realize that it is the one unanswerable argument of all religion, either yours, my grandfather's or TK's. I have always seen that one of the greatest features of Christ was that he never argued, and that the only logical theology is that of Pascal, who declared that Christianity makes no pretense to being a self-evident religion, but is based on the idea that he that doeth the Will shall know of the Doctrine.

I say this argument is unanswerable—but that does not mean convincing. In fact, come to think of it, the same argument would work the other way just as well. For instance: A friend tries to persuade me that I shall live a life of self-indulgence. I reply that such a doctrine appears to me unreasonable, and is contrary to all I have been accustomed to believe. He then says he is convinced of the truth of what he says, from personal experience; that he has gone through

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the same difficulties I have, and that if I will only make a test of his way of living I shall know as he does. I try it, and there is no doubt I shall agree with him.

Don't offer objections, for I have seen it too many times. For every man who assumes a life of high standards there is one who goes the other way; and for every man who returns to the right there is one who falls back to the wrong.

So, I say, the power of man to delude himself is great, and I do not doubt that if one took the necessary technical work, in the right manner, he could see all the sixteen colors of the rainbow that TK sees, and more too.

As for TK, I think he makes a most important admission against himself when he says that many of his friends and relatives are mediums—which would indicate that he was born and raised in an atmosphere of Spiritualism, and if his beliefs tend that way it is not strange.

Now, what are my ideas with regard to disembodied spirits, mediums, etc. after reading TK? Well, I had never read anything authoritative along this line before, and I must say I am not prepared to reject the facts which he alleges. He certainly puts the phenomena of mediumship on a more or less reasonable basis; and as for the possibility of disembodied spirits existing and communicating with human beings, it is no stranger than the things we know to be true. I think you and I have long agreed there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in Horatio's philosophy, or Noah K.'s, either.

I remember asking Prof. C. once, at a certain point in our Psychology lesson, just what relation hypnotism bore to the point we were then discussing. I thought it a most pertinent question, but what I got was this: "Now, Mr. N., you are getting just a little too fast. If you will only be patient we will come to hypnotism in due course and in its proper

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order." So I waited, but we never got to hypnotism.

The trouble with me is that I have never in my life had an experience which corresponded, even remotely, with such things as TK describes. Hypnotism I have seen, and the action of one mind on another is, of course, undeniable; but I should be inclined to say that all phenomena of so-called Spiritualism, or Theosophy, could be explained by the natural tendency of the mind to illude itself. Considering the delicate texture of the brain, its impressionability, susceptibility to disorders and derangements, considering the force which mere suggestions on the natural plane have in the life of all of us, as TK brings out very strongly, I think it is a wonder good horse sense is as common as it is, and bats in the belfry not more frequent.

I think, too, that whether TK's assumptions are really true, involves not merely a question of fact, but of the very nature of reality. One can believe all he says without following him in his deductions a single step. In any case, if I had seen, as he has, a child talk several different languages of which it was known to be ignorant, if I were convinced that fraud was out of the question, I should be forced to believe as he does.

In general, the position these books leave me in is, that I should not be unready to accept the facts as recounted, with regard to spirits, etc., provided I saw these things for myself. But you see, what I am also trying to say is, that the fact that I might verify the whole thing for myself, would of itself be little proof of the actuality of my verifications, though for me it undoubtedly would be sufficient.

The most interesting part of the books, to me, was the outline of the great age of the Great School, its connection with Freemasonry and with Christ and with Hindu Mysticism. I have read, of course, wonderful stories of the marvelous powers of the Hindus—disembodiment, clairvoyance, prolonga-

tion of life, etc., and have considered if there were not something in it all. If not, how did such stories gain currency? Conan Doyle's "*Mystery of Cloomber*" and A. E. W. Mason's "*The Broken Road*" are two novels I have recently read which bring in such matters. I do not recommend them particularly.

As for G.T.,\* I have been to school with him since we were both ten years old, played football with him and think I know him pretty well. He is not only ill-balanced, but of a second-rate mentality. The only other person I know that has been greatly impressed by the books is my uncle Ad—who, while a lawyer of some note, and one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of his State, is, frankly, ill-balanced, and notably so. He is, by the way, a 33° Mason, being one of the six or seven officers of the Order in the United States. He has told me that the Masonic conception of the Universe is one of the most sublime ideas possible to the human mind, possessing evidences of great antiquity and superhuman origin, or something of the sort.

I should like to have Prof. William James' opinion of TK from the standpoint of Pragmatic Philosophy. For my own part, I think there are perfectly valid reasons for living a decent life, that have nothing to do with all of Mr. TK's notions; and I fear if we all went in for that sort of thing, the instruction of youth and the building of railroads would suffer.

\*One of the rising young attorneys of the South and a student of the Great School and Work.

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Every man and every woman is a factor for health or disease, for harmony or discord, for happiness or unhappiness. Every human being radiates his own conditions, physical, spiritual and psychical. The radius of personal influence is only limited by personal power, and by the counter influences of other individuals.

—Harmonics of Evolution.

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## *Under the Library Lights*



E SHOULD BE GRATEFUL for little books. They are the jewels of the heart, the companions of the pocket, food for the leisure moment, the golden wheat from which the chaff has been winnowed and cleansed. Buy these little volumes often, choosing those which appeal to you, slip one or two into the pocket to be read on the small journey, the street-car or train ride to and from work, and by this means you will employ your faculties at those moments when you are most prone to loaf mentally and spiritually.



### *The Way of Initiation.*

By Rudolph Steiner.

In Germany, Rudolph Steiner ranks as one of the foremost mystic teachers and occult writers. While at present actively identified with the German Branch of the Theosophical Society, yet his training in spiritual matters was not obtained from that movement. Dr. Steiner's activities have been along literary lines and we are fortunate in having excellent translations of two of his books—"The Way of Initiation" and "Initiation and Its Results".

In the former, which has for its sub-title, "How to obtain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds", the author endeavors to make plain the Path or Way which the eager aspirant must travel in his quest for spiritual things. He points out that a certain reverential or devotional attitude of Soul is one of the first necessary possessions of the Student who expects to make much progress on the path to the higher knowledge.

He also divides that Path into three stages corresponding to the development of the Student himself, viz., the stages of [1] Probation, [2] Enlightenment, and [3] Initiation. He endeavors to show how the Student must meet and endure certain trials and tests as he passes through these three stages. If the Student successfully passes through these various trials incident to Probation, Enlightenment and Initiation, he attains to the Higher Education of the Soul which brings with it certain psychic powers such as Clairvoyance and Clairaudience.

The author uses diction that is clear, forceful and graceful, and therefore readable. His method is philosophic rather than scientific. One of the most interesting chapters of the book is the last—"Conditions of Discipleship"—which may be read with profit by all students who aspire to travel the Path toward Light.

Price, \$1.00.

### *Initiation and its Results.*

By Rudolph Steiner.

In this book, which is a sequel to "*The Way of Initiation*", the author attempts to describe the changes which take place within the Student as a result of the disciplinary practices incident to his passing through the process of Initiation. This is done in a non-technical manner. In fact, Dr. Steiner is to be commended for keeping his work free from the excessive use of the Oriental terminology which is nearly always confusing and usually not in harmony with the Occidental method of thought. The awakening of the astral senses, the constitution of the etheric body, the various states of consciousness, are clearly and interestingly described in successive chapters. The growth of these various things in the Student is set forth with evident accuracy.

The chapter on "The Dissociation of Human Personality

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"During Initiation" is perhaps the most interesting and instructive in the book. The volume closes with a description of "The Guardian of the Threshold", which, according to the author, is not one, but two "Grim Horrors" which are met with by all Students who reach a certain stage in their development. Here we have explained to us the "Grim Terror of the Threshold" so mysteriously spoken of in Bulwer-Lytton's "Zanoni".

We have no hesitation in recommending these two books to the Friends and Students of the Work. The fact that they constitute a phase of work, similar to that of the Great School, in another Nation and amid different environments from our own work, adds to their interest. Those students who have reached a certain stage in the Work will find many experiences, many self-noticed inward changes very accurately described in these books. All the Students and Friends will, we think, enjoy reading them.

But the author himself wisely suggests quite often that it would not be advisable for any student to undertake the technical work he outlines—except under the guidance of "one who knows" and has traveled the path. We heartily commend and emphasize this suggestion.

Beautifully printed and bound in cloth. Price \$1.00.

### *The Bible, What it Is and Is Not.*

By Joseph Wood.

This volume is a compilation in book form of a series of popular public lectures in Biblical criticism. The author has given much labor, thought and study to his work, and a perusal of the pages of the book gives abundant evidence that he is thoroughly competent as a critic and judge to deal with the Bible as he has done.

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The general title, as given above, covers the sub-title, which is the much debated question of the inspiration of the Bible. In developing and elucidating his theme the author discusses and compares the great Bibles of the World, comments on the various versions of our own Bible, particularly the Authorized and Revised Versions, defines Infallibility and Inspiration, and points out many mistakes and contradictions in the Scriptures of both text and fact.

Several chapters are given to the discussion of the subject, "Evolution in the Bible", a discussion both interesting and instructive. The crowning chapter of the book is that devoted to the discussion of the Right Use and Interpretation of the Bible", in which the writer takes the position that the spirit and not the letter of the Bible is to be taken as the Rule and Guide of Life. "The letter killeth; the spirit giveth life" is quoted often to illustrate the author's staunch position.

The book is worthy the interest of the Friends of our Work. Among other things it should be read for the valuable information it portrays concerning the origin and compilation of our English Bible and for the sane and unprejudiced way in which the old mooted question of its inspiration is discussed and decided. Published in London, by Philip Green.

### *The Sanctuary.*

By W. W. Hicks.

If it be true, as Solomon has said, that the possession of knowledge is like unto the possession of precious gems, then "*The Sanctuary*" is a rich jewel casket, for it is filled with pearls of wisdom. It is the voice of a disciple of a master of India speaking to the children of men in an endeavor to make plain the Path toward Light. The author of "*The Sanctuary*", a little book of some 120 pages, is Dr. W. W. Hicks, who from

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the fullness of his venerable experience has given expression to much that is beautiful, bright and practical.

The first few pages are devoted to a description of the life of Nagasena, a great Master of India, who lived about B.C. 300. Other pages are devoted to the discussion of the topics, "In Sweet Accord", "Friend and Refuge", "Unfailing Love", "Sayings of the Masters", "Right Intuition", etc. The book is written in the conversational style, a thing which must appeal to the reader, for he feels at once that he is taken into the confidence of the author as a friend and brother. The tone of the whole work is sympathetic and harmonic and for this reason alone, not to mention others, it should appeal to the friends and students of our Work. We believe that as many as possible of the friends of the Work should take both the time and opportunity to get this book and read it.

Cloth bound, price \$1.00.

### *Daisy Dryden. A Memoir.*

By Mrs. S. H. Dryden.

Literature records very many instances where the spiritual sight of dying persons has been opened shortly before death, enabling the expiring person to experience various phenomena from the spiritual world.

In the book "*Daisy Dryden*" is recorded in an excellent manner the spiritual experiences which came to a little girl of ten years of age just before her physical death. For three days prior to her passing, her spiritual faculties were opened to such an extent that she was able to see, hear, and converse with many persons in the spirit world. Her physical faculties were unimpaired so that she was able to communicate many messages from spiritual personages to her bedside companions, particularly to her mother, who has written these experiences

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down and caused them to be published under the title, "*Daisy Dryden*". The story is well and pleasingly told, colored perhaps with a mother's sympathetic love, but full of interest and well worth reading.

Bound in paper cover - Price 15 cents. Postage 2c.

### *Evolution.*

By Langdon Smith

Some years ago—in 1895, to be exact—Langdon Smith, a New York newspaper man, wrote a poem entitled, "*Evolution*", which he read at a banquet one evening at Delmonico's, and which, to use colloquial parlance, made a decided "hit" with the audience. Some years later the author added several more stanzas to the original, and still later it appeared in one of the New York daily papers.

The present volume contains the original poem published with explanatory notes, a short biographical sketch of the author, and a review of the theory and progress of evolution, all illustrated with excellent drawings.

The poem is of undoubted worth and deals with Evolution in a very interesting if not an intensely scientific manner. There is no doubt left in the mind of the reader as to the position of the author on reincarnation. Those readers who enjoy poetry and like to possess handsome books will appreciate the little volume not only from the standpoint of literary art but from the standpoint of the book-binder's art as well.

Large octavo, bound in beautiful style, leather and boards with white marbeled sides. Price \$1.00.



## What is Love?

In the January-February number of *Life and Action* we asked the above question, adding thereto the words "scientifically defined". Two of our readers have responded as follows:

1. "Love is the intense desire that all creatures may be established in Peace." —H. G. Burnham.



2. "Primarily: Love is the elective affinity of two differing cells.

Secondarily: Love is the egoistic desire for Self-Completion.

Third: Ethically, Love is the soul's necessity for right relations between individuals of opposite polarity.

Fourth: Psychologically, Love is the recognition of, and intelligent co-operation with, the Constructive Forces in life.

Fifth: Religiously, which includes all these evolutionary steps, Love is an ideal which calls for the best expenditure of individual effort to produce, and participate in, a state of individual harmonics, or happiness.

Finally: Love, in its highest expression, is the desire to serve the one beloved for his or her own good, without recompense or thought of reward, save in the joy of the service.

Love is the Will to Serve.

Love is Life in Action."

—Frances E. Banks.

It is sufficient, at present, to suggest that the subject has not yet been fully exhausted, nor covered.—Editor.

## *Another Conception of Mirth*

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By James P. Holdt.

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THE ANSWER given to the question "What is Mirth?", in a previous issue, does not seem to me the right one. Being closely related to one of the great principles, and therefore important, I cannot allow a statement by *Life and Action* which is not true, pass unchallenged. To do so, would be a lack of courage in the service of Truth.

It is not an attitude of dogmatism in metaphysical discussion, nor the prompting of any selfish motive, which constrains me to write on the subject. I would gladly accept a correction of my own conclusions, if sufficient reasons prove them wrong, and be grateful to him who gives me better knowledge. It is only in this sense, and not to criticise, that the following synopsis of the given definition and its reasons is submitted.

In the entire answer there is apparent the most prolific error in abstract thinking, that of confounding cause and effect in their relation to each other. It is the most difficult to detect and constitutes the barrier which disables so many entirely, to reach conclusions by true logic.

"Levity" in the common acceptation of the word, means almost the same as "Mirth". The difference lies in this, that levity contains a slight admixture to mirth, of what is immoral or improper—not enough of it to make it positively evil, and which is yet not right in the strictest sense. The significance of that word lies about half way between mirth and frivolity.

Levity is not a principle at all.

The very essence of a principle is something basic and

fundamental. It is a law of nature, or it is a rule of conduct. It is, as such, never a condition, or attitude of mind, or phenomena. It is a thing of which these are effects.

In nature, as distinguished from ourselves, there is no decorum, no mirth, no levity. It has no moods. Nature never does grotesque things. All these various conditions and qualities are within ourselves only, as the result of principles or laws, which govern our life. In nature outside of ourselves they have no existence. Nature can no more be accused of levity, than the earth could be charged with cracking a bad joke when it destroyed Lisbon with a quake.

To personify any human trait, or call it a principle of nature is permissible in a poetic sense, or for purposes of description and illustration. It is also true in a cosmic or general sense, since we are ingredients of the cosmos.

But to say, mirth is the harmonic relation to the principle of levity—or, levity is the harmonic relation to the principle of mirth, which the individual intelligence sustains in nature—conveys no definite thought to my mind. Sifted to its ultimate significance, it is simply the statement that mirth is a harmonious relation in nature pertaining to man.

But mirth is not only a harmonious relation between man and nature. It is that only under certain definite conditions. There may be conditions under which it is quite the contrary. Mirth is not only a harmonious relation of self to something else, but it is also the expression of that relation. Without that expression it would remain a harmonious relation, without becoming mirth.

However, this is enough to show that the definition is not complete, neither by excluding all that the term does not mean, nor by including all that it does mean. Neither does it explain one word by the statement of its meaning in other words which fully describe the idea it represents.

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There is a principle, a great law of life and rule of conduct, of which mirth is an evidence in the individual—but “levity” is not its name.

The message the Great School is endeavoring to convey to the world, consists of the principles of thought and action laid down in the “Harmonic Series” of books, and the Great Work is to use and apply them in daily life. Therefore, a correct understanding of the relations these principles bear to the ideas in common use, and consequently to logical thinking—is very important for the success of the work.

The answer given does not logically elucidate the relation of mirth to any of the principles which the Great School especially represents. It is based on imaginary analogy, and is a false conclusion, reached by faulty reasoning.

One who appreciates the vast significance of the “Great Work”, and whose reason has accepted the truth it conveys, is bound by his personal responsibility, not only to conform his life to that knowledge, but also to combat error. Not even the authority of *Life and Action*’s editorial dictum, or any other person’s authority or opinion, should deter him from speaking out what he feels should be said—especially when hostile criticism would find an effective weapon to injure the work in the minds of the public.

You will ever find me ready and willing to labor for the cause of Truth and Good Will among men, and it is in the name of these that the above considerations are submitted.

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## Notice to Contributors

One of the invariable rules of this magazine is that it will not answer anonymous communications.

We call special attention to this rule once more, lest some of our contributors may not have understood it heretofore.

It frequently occurs that we receive questions for the Question Box, or other communications asking for replies, from friends who fail to give us their names.

Only today comes an interesting inquiry from some nameless friend who sends us a copy of "*An Ancient Prayer*" which she has received with a request to copy it nine times in as many days, sending each copy to a different friend, with like request to make and send nine copies—and so on, in an "endless chain".

She neglects to give us her name, and therefore we must put her letter aside.

If any contributor does not desire to have his name appear in our columns, all he need do is to indicate that fact, and give us a *nom de plume*, or request that we use only his initials. He can depend upon us to honor his confidence.

But in all cases we publish the writer's own name if he fails to request us to withhold it.

Our contributors will please bear this rule in mind, and give us their names under all circumstances. If they desire to have the same withheld, notify us of that fact and instruct us what *nom de plume* or initials we shall use.



## *Look Pleasant*

We cannot, of course, all be handsome,  
And it's hard for us all to be good;  
We are sure now and then to be lonely,  
And we don't always do as we should.

To be patient is not always easy,  
To be cheerful is much harder still;  
But at least we can always be pleasant,  
If we make up our mind that we will.

And it pays every time to look kindly,  
Although you feel worried and blue;  
If you smile at the world and be cheerful,  
The world will smile back at you.

So try to brace up and look pleasant,  
No matter how low you are down,  
Good humor is always contagious,  
But you banish your friends  
when you frown.

—Anonymous.

